

# Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

## A Day Late and a Dollar Short

Standard:

- I. Culture
- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
- IX. Global Connections

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives: The student will:

- Record briefly the events leading up to war with Great Britain (1812)
- Connect the letter of Cadore to the trickery of Napoleon
- Interpret two political cartoons of the period and update to the present

Time: 1 class period

Materials: Documents: **1810** *The Cadore Letter*  
**1814** *The Treaty of Ghent*

Exercises: *A Day Late*

Resources: *Two Political Cartoons* (transfer onto transparency)

Textbooks

Procedures:

### *Setting the Stage*

Four years of fruitless negotiations with the warring countries of France and Great Britain ground to a halt when the War Hawks in Congress declared that they'd had enough. Thomas Jefferson felt that the events leading to this "second American Revolution" shook the foundations of the government he envisioned.

This lesson traces the growing exasperation experienced by the young Republic. It also emphasizes the importance of timely communications. If these events had occurred in a time when communications were faster, maybe the exasperation of the "day too late" wouldn't have led to the massive losses sustained by American commercial interests. Truly, a "dollar too short."

1. Use an overhead projector to display the two cartoons if available or distribute on paper and ask students to "Think, Pair, Share" in groups of twos what they see? Who are the characters? What is the situation? (They will have previously studied the Embargo Act so there should be prior knowledge accessed.)

**2.** Hand out the *Day Late* exercise and instruct them to continue working in pairs to fill in a short description of what each of these events did to the rising state of exasperation in the new Republic. (*Note:* students may use textbooks.)

**3.** As they get close to Step 12 (Cadore's letter) distribute the copy of that document, as it will not be in the textbook.

**4.** When all the pairs are finished, discuss the possibility that a change in any one step could have diminished or stopped the growing clamor for war. Ask the students which event they would choose?

**5.** Ask students to pay close attention to and note specific dates, What days *could have made a difference* if the information/news had been received a day earlier?

How would modern information technology affect similar situations today? (For example, did President Barack Obama's ability to follow in real time the operation Osama bin Laden's compound affect decision making?) How has technology changed diplomacy?

**6.** Using the political cartoons and the information from the *Day Late* exercise, students should create a new political cartoon as homework. Later, display their cartoons in the classroom.

Extension Activities:

**1.** Discuss with students the economic impact of any or all of these events on different sections of the new country. Why were the Westerners eager to avenge "insults to the flag?" Why were the New England shippers angry?

**2.** Why are the events of this period sometimes referred to as America's Economic Warfare? ■

**3.** Have students design an additional chart/graph showing the economic distress of various sections of the country. ■